

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 27 June 2019

Wards: All

Subject: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2019/20

Lead officer: Rosie Mckeever Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Cllr Natasha Irons Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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Recommendations:

That members of Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

- i. Consider their work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year, and agree issues and items for inclusion (see draft in Appendix 1);
 - ii. Consider the methods by which the Panel would like to scrutinise the issues/items agreed;
 - iii. Identify a Member to lead on performance monitoring on behalf of the Panel;
 - iv. Identify a Member to lead on budget scrutiny on behalf of the Panel;
 - v. Agree on an issue for scrutiny by a task group and appoint members to the Task Group (Appendix 5);
 - vi. Consider the appointment of co-opted members for the 2019/20 municipal year, to sit on the Panel and/or on the Task Group;
 - vii. Consider whether they wish to make visits to local sites and engage with topic experts; and
 - viii. Identify any training and support needs.
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to support and advise Members to determine their work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.
- 1.2 This report sets out the following information to assist Members in this process:
 - a) The principles of effective scrutiny and the criteria against which work programme items should be considered;
 - b) The roles and responsibilities of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
 - c) The findings of the consultation programme undertaken with councillors and co-opted members, Council senior management, voluntary and community sector organisations, partner organisations and Merton residents;
 - d) A summary of the discussion by councillors at a topic selection workshop held on 20 May 2019 and

e) Support available to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel to determine, develop and deliver its 2019/20 work programme.

2. **Determining the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Annual Work Programme**

- 2.1 Members are required to determine their work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of Merton.
- 2.2 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel has a specific role relating to housing, environmental sustainability, culture, enterprise and skills, libraries and transport scrutiny and to performance monitoring that should automatically be built into their work programmes.
- 2.3 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel may choose to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work. Any call-in work will be programmed into the corporate calendar as required.
- 2.4 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel has six scheduled meetings over the course of 2019/20, including the scheduled budget meeting (representing a maximum of 18 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 3 hours per meeting). Members will therefore need to be selective in their choice of items for the work programme.

Principles guiding the development of the scrutiny work programme

- 2.5 The following key principles of effective scrutiny should be considered when the Panel determines its work programme:
- **Be selective** – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve.
 - **Add value with scrutiny** – Items should have the potential to ‘add value’ to the work of the council and its partners. If it is not clear what the intended outcomes or impact of a review will be then Members should consider if there are issues of a higher priority that could be scrutinised instead.
 - **Be ambitious** – The Panel should not shy away from carrying out scrutiny of issues that are of local concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental well being of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.

- **Be flexible** – Members are reminded that there needs to be a degree of flexibility in their work programme to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration/comment during the year and accommodate any developmental or additional work that falls within the remit of this Panel. For example, Members may wish to question officers regarding the declining performance of a service or may choose to respond to a Councillor Call for Action request.
- **Think about the timing** – Members should ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, their findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. Members should seek to avoid duplication of work carried out elsewhere.

Models for carrying out scrutiny work

2.6 There are a number of ways the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel can deliver its work programme. Members should consider which of the following options is most appropriate to undertake each of the items they have selected for inclusion in the work programme:

Item on a scheduled meeting agenda/ hold an extra meeting of the Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Panel can agree to add an item to the agenda for a meeting and call Cabinet Members/ Officers/Partners to the meeting to respond to questioning on the matter ■ A variation of this model could be a one-day seminar-scrutiny of issues that, although important, do not merit setting up a 'task-and-finish' group.
Task Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A small group of Members meet outside of the scheduled meetings to gather information on the subject area, visit other local authorities/sites, and speak to service users, expert witnesses and/or Officers/Partners. The Task Group can then report back to the Commission with their findings to endorse the submission of their recommendations to Cabinet/Council ■ This is the method usually used to carry out policy reviews
The Panel asks for a report then takes a view on action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Panel may need more information before taking a view on whether to carry out a full review so asks for a report – either from the service department or from the Scrutiny Team – to give it more details.
Meeting with service Officer/Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Member (or small group of Members) has a meeting with service officers/Partners to discuss concerns or raise queries. ■ If the Member is not satisfied with the outcome or believes that the Panel needs to have a more in-depth review of the matter they take it back to the Panel for discussion
Individual Members doing some initial research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A member with a specific concern carries out some research to gain more information on the matter and then brings his/her findings to the attention of the Panel if s/he still has concerns. ■ A new model of scrutiny review has recently been developed and trialled; a rapporteur review where an

	individual member undertakes a review with the endorsement of the Panel.
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2.7 Note that, in order to keep agendas to a manageable size, and to focus on items to which the Panel can make a direct contribution, the Panel may choose to take some “information only” items outside of Panel meetings, for example by email.

Support available for scrutiny activity

2.8 The Overview and Scrutiny function has dedicated scrutiny support from the Scrutiny Team to:

- Work with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Panel to manage the work programme and coordinate the agenda, including advising officers and partner organisations on information required and guidance for witnesses submitting evidence to a scrutiny review;
- Provide support for scrutiny members through briefing papers, background material, training and development seminars, etc;
- Facilitate and manage the work of the task and finish groups, including research, arranging site visits, inviting and briefing witnesses and drafting review reports on behalf on the Chair; and
- Promote the scrutiny function across the organisation and externally.

2.9 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel will need to assess how it can best utilise the available support from the Scrutiny Team to deliver its work programme for 2019/20.

2.10 The Panel is also invited to comment on any briefing, training and support that is needed to enable Members to undertake their work programme. Members may also wish to undertake visits to local services in order to familiarise themselves with these. Such visits should be made with the knowledge of the Chair and will be organised by the Scrutiny Team. Additionally, Members may wish to seek the input of acknowledged subject experts.

2.11 The Scrutiny Team will take on board the views of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel when developing the support that is provided.

3. Selecting items for the Scrutiny Work Programme

3.1 The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel sets its own agenda within the scope of its terms of reference. It has the following remit:

- Housing, including housing need, affordable housing and private sector housing;
- Environmental sustainability, including energy, waste management, parks and open spaces and the built environment;
- Culture, including tourism, museums, arts, sports and leisure;
- Enterprise and skills, including regeneration, employment, adult education and libraries; and
- Transport.

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for issues to scrutinise either as agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions have been received from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the Merton Voluntary Service Council. The Scrutiny Team has consulted departmental management teams in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the Panel could contribute to the policymaking process.
- 3.2 A description of all the suggestions received is set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The councillors who attended a “topic selection” workshop on 20 May 2019 discussed these suggestions. Suggestions were prioritised at the workshop using the criteria listed in Appendix 3. In particular, participants sought to identify issues that related to the Council’s strategic priorities or where there was underperformance; issues of public interest or concern and issues where scrutiny could make a difference.
- 3.4 A note of the workshop discussion relating to the remit of the Panel is set out in Appendix 4.
- 3.5 Appendix 1 contains a draft work programme that has been drawn up, taking the workshop discussion into account, for the consideration of the Panel. The Panel is requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.
- 4. Task group reviews**
- 4.1 The Panel is invited to select an issue for in-depth scrutiny and establish a task group. Topics identified for potential task group review at the workshop on 20 May 2019 are set out for further review and discussion in Appendix 5.
- 5. Co-option to the Panel membership**
- 5.1 Scrutiny Panels can consider whether to appoint non-statutory (non-voting) co-optees to the membership, in order to add to the specific knowledge, expertise and understanding of key issues to aid the scrutiny function. Panels members may also wish to consider whether it may be helpful to co-opt people from “seldom heard” groups.
- 6. Public involvement**
- 6.1 Scrutiny provides extensive opportunities for community involvement and democratic accountability. Engagement with service users and with the public can help to improve the quality, legitimacy and long-term viability of recommendations made by the Panel.
- 6.2 Service users and the public bring different perspectives, experiences and solutions to scrutiny, particularly if “seldom heard” groups such as young people, disabled people, people from black and minority ethnic communities and people from lesbian gay bisexual and transgender communities are included.
- 6.3 This engagement will help the Panel to understand the service user’s perspective on individual services and on co-ordination between services. Views can be heard directly through written or oral evidence or heard indirectly through making use of existing sources of information, for example from surveys. From time to time, the Panel/Task Group may wish to carry out engagement activities of its own, by holding discussion groups or sending questionnaires on particular issues of interest.

- 6.4 Much can be learnt from best practice already developed in Merton and elsewhere. The Scrutiny Team will be able to help the Panel to identify the range of stakeholders from which it may wish to seek views and the best way to engage with particular groups within the community.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 A number of issues highlighted in this report recommend that Panel members take into account certain considerations when setting their work programme for 2019/20. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is free to determine its work programme as it sees fit. Members may therefore choose to identify a work programme that does not take into account these considerations. This is not advised as ignoring the issues raised would either conflict with good practice and/or principles endorsed in the Review of Scrutiny, or could mean that adequate support would not be available to carry out the work identified for the work programme.
- 7.2 A range of suggestions from the public, partner organisations, officers and Members for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme are set out in the appendices, together with a suggested approach to determining which to include in the work programme. Members may choose to respond differently. However, in doing so, Members should be clear about expected outcomes, how realistic expectations are and the impact of their decision on their wider work programme and support time. Members are also free to incorporate into their work programme any other issues they think should be subject to scrutiny over the course of the year, with the same considerations in mind.

8. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 8.1 To assist Members to identify priorities for inclusion in the Panel's work programme, the Scrutiny Team has undertaken a campaign to gather suggestions for possible scrutiny reviews from a number of sources:
- a. Members of the public have been approached using the following tools: articles in the local press, request for suggestions from all councillors and co-opted members, email correspondence to partner organisations and to a range of local voluntary and community organisations, including those involved in the Inter-Faith Forum and members of the Lesbian Gay and Transgender Forum, publicity in libraries and on social media;
 - b. Councillors have put forward suggestions by raising issues in scrutiny meetings, via the Overview and Scrutiny Member Survey 2019, and by contacting the Scrutiny Team direct; and
 - c. Officers have been consulted via discussion at departmental management team meetings.

9. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the financial, resource and property issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific financial, resource and property implications.

10. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Overview and scrutiny bodies operate within the provisions set out in the Local Government Act 2000, the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 10.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the legal and statutory issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific legal and statutory implications.

11. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement. The reviews will involve work to consult local residents, community and voluntary sector groups, businesses, hard to reach groups, partner organisations etc and the views gathered will be fed into the review.
- 11.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the human rights, equalities and community cohesion issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Police and Justice Act 2006, all Council departments must have regard to the impact of services on crime, including anti-social behaviour and drugs. Scrutiny review reports will therefore highlight any implications arising from the reviews relating to crime and disorder as necessary.

13. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the risk management and health and safety issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific risk management and health and safety implications.

14. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- 14.1 Appendix 1 – Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel draft work programme 2019/20
- 14.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of topics relating to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel's remit suggested for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme
- 14.3 Appendix 3 – Selecting a Scrutiny Topic criteria
- 14.4 Appendix 4 – Notes of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Topic Selection Workshop on 20 May 2019
- 14.5 Appendix 5 – Task group options as identified at the workshop on 20 May 2019.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 None

Draft work programme 2019/2020

27 June 2019 (agenda deadline: 12pm 18 June 2019)

Item/Issue
• Parking Consultation
• Performance monitoring: Review KPI's
• Agreement of task group: Local economy / Fly tipping
• For approval: Setting the work programme.

3 September 2019 - Waste (agenda deadline: 12pm 26 August 2019)

Item/Issue
• Cabinet Member priorities (x three)
• Scrutiny of external body: Veolia
• Scrutiny review: Environmental Enforcement (Fly Tipping Strategy)
• Task group (TBC): approval of terms of reference
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

30 October 2019 – Housing (agenda deadline: 12pm 22 October 2019)

Item/Issue
• Pre-decision scrutiny: Budget/business planning (round 1)
• Scrutiny of external body: Clarion Housing Group (focus on repairs and maintenance)
• Update report: Housing Strategy
• Scrutiny review: Support for private renters
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

8 January 2020 - Air Quality (agenda deadline: 12pm 30 December 2019)

Item/Issue
• Pre-decision scrutiny: Budget/business planning (round 2)
• Update report: Diesel Levy Implementation
• Update report: Local Implementation Plan
• Update report: Single Use Plastics Action Plan
• Update report: Air Quality Action Plan
• Performance monitoring
• Work programme

25 February 2020 - Regeneration (agenda deadline: 12pm 17 February 2019)

Item/Issue
• Scrutiny of external body: Clarion Housing Group (focus on regeneration)
• Update report: Design Review Panel

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update report: Sustainable Travel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update presentation: Town centre regeneration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task group (TBC): presentation of draft final report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance monitoring:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work programme

17 March 2020 – Culture (agenda deadline: 12pm 9 March 2020)

Item/Issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report: Library and Heritage Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report: Merton Adult Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update report: London Borough of Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member priorities (x three)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance monitoring: grounds maintenance (idverde)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work programme

Appendix 2

Topic suggestions received in relation to the remit of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel 2019/20

The following topics have been suggested by residents, members and officers:

The Sustainable Communities Panel received a large number of topic suggestions. Taking all of these suggestions forward would result in an overloaded work programme with a need for additional meetings. To avoid this being a necessity, it is suggested that Members choose a set number of 14 topics and 1 task group from the lists below, on the understanding that urgent items can be added as required during the year.

Recommended 'must do's' (DMT recs, standing items or high resident interest)	Nice to have (Recommended to accept a max of 7)	Could be parked (Could be added if urgent matter or update within service/area arises)
Air Quality	Diesel Levy Implementation	Economy
Budget/Business planning	Highways & Maintenance Contract	Library and Heritage Service Annual Report
Cabinet Member priorities	Grounds Maintenance – Idverde	Merton Adult Education Annual Report
Clarion Housing Group	Housing <i>(Please note there are 8 topics suggested in this area)</i>	Planning Enforcement/Development Control <i>(Please note there are 4 topics suggested in this area)</i>
Environmental Enforcement - Fly tipping	Parking <i>(Please note there are 4 topics suggested in this area)</i>	Public Toilets – Community toilet scheme initiative
Local Implementation Plan	London Borough of Culture	Sustainable Travel
Performance monitoring		Town Centre Regeneration
Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning		

AIR QUALITY	
Who suggested it?	Residents and Community Groups through the topic suggestion process.
Summary	<p>This is a steadily growing issue with increasing evidence it is a major cause for concern for Residents and Community Groups. The representations received on air quality from residents as part of this year's topic suggestion process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results of surveys by both Mitcham Society and Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage have shown pollution levels exceeding legal limits. • Air quality legal limits being exceeded in Mitcham and Raynes Park (Grand Drive/Bushey Road) • The lack of publically available monitoring statistics on the boroughs air quality <p>February Council on 6 Feb resolved that:</p> <p><i>“The scrutiny process is greatly valued in Merton, and this council supports that Panel system, and opposes the removal of scrutiny powers from them into the hands of individuals. The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is an autonomous body that sets its own remit, but council asks it in its role as Air Quality Scrutiny Champion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>to continue to maintain an up-to-date understanding of Council/contractor issues affecting air quality;</i> • <i>to obtain briefings from relevant officers as required;</i> • <i>to seek co-operative working with the relevant Cabinet Member(s) and to provide input as required; and</i> • <i>to work to promote improvements in the scrutiny of air quality plans and activity within the Council.”</i> <p>This is a broad issue which crosses over with multiple other topics, E.g. monitoring the implementation of the diesel levy to assess whether the policy is beginning to have an impact on desired outcomes. Also the Panel awaits the results of the public consultation on the proposals outlined in the Public health, air quality and sustainable transport – a strategic approach to parking charges 2 report.</p>

	At its Feb 2019 meeting the Panel recommended that the Air Quality Task Group return in a year's time.
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	25 February 2020 (monitoring performance against the Air Quality Action Plan and the implementation of the task group recommendations).
Expert(s)	15.1.1. The Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk (set up on behalf of DEFRA) could attend with information and guidance on implementing Air Quality Action Plans for improvement of local air quality and answer Members questions on air quality monitoring, modelling and emissions.

BUDGET/BUSINESS PLANNING	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing, annually returning item.
Summary	Members are asked to consider all aspects of the budget that relate to the appropriate elements of the departmental budgets for Community & Housing and Environment & Regeneration. This can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to previously agreed savings; • New departmental saving proposals; • Budget growth proposals; • The resulting impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy; and • Relevant service plans.
Scrutiny type	Pre-decision scrutiny
Timing	This takes place in two rounds; Possibly <u>30 October 2019</u> and <u>8 January 2020</u>
Guidance	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services, will provide training before the first meeting giving a detailed guide to the Medium Term Financial Strategy. <u>All members are encouraged to attend.</u> This includes those who have attended previously as guidance is provided on the current financial position.
Expert(s)	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services, will attend both meetings.

CABINET MEMBER PRIORITIES	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing annual/bi-annual item.
Summary	The Cabinet Members for Community and Culture, Regeneration, Housing and Transport and Environment and Street Cleanliness to present their priorities and progress against these to the Panel and provide the opportunity for

	Panel members to ask questions.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight
Timing	30 th October 2019

CLARION HOUSING GROUP	
Who suggested it?	Continuation of the Panel's scrutiny of the borough's leading social housing provider. DMT have also requested this through the topic suggestion process making a particular reference to the estates regeneration.
Summary	<p>The Panel continued its scrutiny of Clarion during the last municipal year with representatives from Clarion Housing returning to update the Panel and answer questions on the estates regeneration. Residents were invited to speak at the Panel and as happened previously, the opportunity was taken to seek questions from all Councillors and not just Panel members.</p> <p>The focus of member interest continues to be on both repairs to existing stock and the regeneration of the three estates.</p> <p>Members will want to ensure that improvements to the repairs process have been maintained and to understand what progress is being made on estates regeneration.</p> <p>The approach of collating and preparing questions for Clarion in advance of the meeting, for its response to be printed as part of the agenda, has worked well over the last few years and is recommended for further use. As in previous years, there would be benefit in inviting all councillors who have Clarion residents in their wards to contribute to the questions and to attend the meeting.</p> <p>Additionally, this would be a good issue on which to engage with local residents with Panel members promoting the session through their Twitter accounts.</p> <p>Members will need to determine if one session in the municipal year is sufficient or if Clarion should be invited to attend at least twice in this year. This would allow repairs to existing stock and plans for regeneration to be taken separately, leading to a stronger focus in each session.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring of an external provider

Guest(s)	Representatives from Clarion Housing Group.
Visit	To look at the proposed regeneration sites

DIESEL LEVY IMPLEMENTATION	
Who suggested it?	This is a continuation of the Panel's previous work on the diesel levy
Summary	<p>A levy charge for all diesel vehicles that have a Resident, Business or Trade parking permit has been implemented. The objective of the scheme is to improve local air quality and consequently improve health outcomes. During the 2018/19 municipal year, the Sustainable Communities Panel undertook pre-decision scrutiny of review of the levy.</p> <p>The Panel's on-going involvement will be to monitor the implementation and consider whether there is evidence to demonstrate that the policy is beginning to have an impact on desired outcomes.</p>
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	(Seek suggestion from Members)

ECONOMY	
Who suggested it?	Members and Community Groups through the topic suggestion process.
Summary	<p>Future funding relies on a buoyant and thriving local business community, it also makes for a more pleasant borough in which to live and work. What more can the council do to encourage businesses to come to and grow within the borough?</p> <p><u>Managing the council's estate</u></p> <p>Review the selling off of land - The Council owns lands, and has been disposing of these over the years, by selling the Freeholds. This short-term approach results in an immediate capital receipt, but the Council then has no further income from the land, nor can it influence how the site is used (other than via the planning system, which of course is subject to appeal and independent decisions by the Inspectorate).</p> <p><u>How can we boost the local economy?</u></p> <p>Potential task group idea – investigating how the Council can better support local businesses and encourage local spending.</p> <p>When you shop at a local, independently-owned businesses,</p>

	<p>as much as 70p in every pound you spend stays in our local economy, according to the Centre for Local Economic Strategies.</p> <p>Encourage co-operatives and resident owned business</p> <p>Back independent businesses that create local employment and use local suppliers</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny Review/Potential task group work
Timing	Seek suggestions from Members
Guests	Local business owners

ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT	
Who suggested it?	Residents through the topic suggestion process.
Summary	<p>The Environmental Enforcement team is an in-house service that sits as part of Public Spaces and works alongside Veolia and its delivery of the waste contract. It has responsibility for investigation and prosecution of fly-tipping, removal of abandoned cars, and the reporting of graffiti.</p> <p>The Environmental Enforcement team are currently reviewing Merton's anti Fly tipping strategy and the communications team are actively involved in identifying the best ways to communicate, not just individual resident responsibilities for managing their own waste, but also how they can assist in identifying perpetrators. They also plan to promote what the EE team do, and the consequences of fly tipping in terms of action that has been and will be taken against those caught.</p> <p>A dedicated item would allow the Panel to look at this strategy in greater depth to better understand how the team works, how fly tipping in the borough being addressed, where are the hot spots and why do they continue to attract dumping, what are the causes of fly-tipping in Merton and how this compares with neighbouring boroughs.</p> <p>What is being done to improve the online reporting tool?</p> <p>There is a growing resident demand for action to improve street cleaning, including recent community-led campaigns.</p> <p><u>Could this work lend itself to a Task Group?</u></p> <p>Could Scrutiny undertake a focused piece of work on potential actions to change behaviours and reduce fly tipping in</p>

	<p>Merton?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analysis of Council Fly-Tipping data, prosecutions and hot spots ➤ Understanding the reasons for behaviour ➤ Run an anonymous survey – why have you fly tipped? ➤ Crew ride along ➤ Look at other LA best practice - Some Local Authorities have changed the term “Fly-tipping” to “Illegal Rubbish Dumping” (IRD) in communications with residents in a bid to change behaviour.
Scrutiny type	Performance data/update report/Task group
Timing	3 September 2019
Guests	As reflected on social media, there has been a high resident interest in fly-tipping. It is likely that should this item proceed, there will be a number of residents interested in making representations.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE - Idverde	
Who suggested it?	Members of the Environment & Regeneration Departmental Management Team in addition to residents and community groups
Summary	<p>Members of the Environment & Regeneration Departmental Management Team suggested the performance of idverde be reviewed.</p> <p>Additionally, this item might pick-up resident requests to look at tree watering and care, leaf and brushwood clearance (and the dwindling number of street trees).</p> <p>This could be achieved by the Panel requesting an update report from officers in addition to requesting the attendance of representatives from Idverde and seeking representations from friends/parks groups such as Mitcham Cricket Green Community and Heritage and Independent Merton Green Spaces Forum who collaborated to provide an independent assessment of the quality of management of parks and other green spaces.</p> <p>The main issues raised in the report were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency – Data on idverde’s performance is rarely published. An “idverde performance dashboard” should be published by Merton Council weekly, akin to that made available in relation to Veolia. • No online reporting system

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idverde staff are lacking basic knowledge of the parks, green spaces and horticultural and grounds maintenance skills. <p>The process could be strengthened by training and advice for Councillors on their responsibilities for major contractual responsibilities akin to that provided for those serving on the Planning Applications Committee.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	3 September 2019 (seek suggestions from members)
Guest(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives from Idverde; • Representatives from resident groups/associations, to receive direct feedback on the quality of the service; and Friends/parks groups.

HIGHWAYS CONTRACT	
Who suggested it?	Members of the Environment & Regeneration Departmental Management Team
Summary	<p>During the last municipal year, the Panel was consulted on the timescale, scope and progress of the re-procurement of Merton's Highway Services and Works contract.</p> <p>The indicative contract commencement date is 1 September 2019. It is recommended that the Panel conduct a six month review of the contract.</p> <p>Four residents through the topic suggestion process asked that there be some review of pot holes, cracked and dangerous pavements and blocked drains in the borough.</p> <p>Two residents asked that the lane markings and traffic light phasing in Mitcham Town Centre, following the re-design, be reviewed as they are causing confusion, inconvenience, accidents and many near-misses.</p>
Scrutiny type	Pre-decision scrutiny.
Timing	25 February 2020 (suggested by the Department).

HOUSING	
Who suggested it?	Housing has received several mentions by residents and by members through the topic suggestion process which seems to indicate that this remains an issue in which there is much interest.

<p>Summary</p>	<p><i>There are 8 main topics for discussion</i></p> <p><u>Merantun</u></p> <p>Merton has established its own property company, Merantun. This aims to generate an on-going income for the Council from housing development and rent for anything up to 30 years. The Panel last received an update presentation on Merantun progress in November 2018. An update presentation would provide an opportunity for members to review Merantun's performance. Update on the initial four sites are in the design and planning phase; planning applications are scheduled to be submitted later in 2019.</p> <p><u>Rough Sleepers</u></p> <p>Why people are facing homelessness in Merton, numbers affected, the health implications for rough sleepers, what does Merton do to help rough sleepers, what other organisations are available in Merton to help rough sleepers and how do we work together.</p> <p><u>Support for private renters</u></p> <p>What are the problems faced by private renters in Merton and what can the Council do to support them.</p> <p><u>Empty homes</u></p> <p>How can Merton ensure that there are as few empty homes as possible and that they are empty for as short a time as possible.</p> <p><u>Impact of Universal Credit</u></p> <p>A resident suggested a review of Universal Credit. During recent months the geographical roll out to all areas of the Borough has been completed and eligibility has been extended to families with three or more children. The Panel could examine the impact locally when there is a possibility to influence change.</p> <p><u>Update on the Homelessness Reduction Act</u></p> <p>The Panel could receive an annual update on the impact of the HRA. Performance monitoring of key housing statistics has been reviewed in nearly every meeting.</p>
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	<p><u>Request Housing Officers attend with an update on the Housing Strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing • Housing supply <p><u>Rogue landlords</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of introducing of a Landlord Registry Scheme • Government's announcement that it intends to repeal Section 21 of the Housing Act 1988, putting an end to Section 21 Notices. The Government has announced it will launch further consultation on this issue. <p>Additionally, there has been a call from a member to look at how we can enforce private and commercial landlords to maintain the exterior of their properties to improve visual appeal of high streets.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review, Update reports
Expert(s)	Housing Needs Officers

LIBRARY AND HERITAGE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing item
Summary	The Panel will take its usual annual report on library and heritage services. This provides the Panel with the opportunity to review progress made with the service in the last financial year, examine performance and discuss key projects.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	To occur a full year after the last report was received by the Panel (March 2020)

LONDON BOROUGH OF CULTURE	
Who suggested it?	Members of the Community and Housing Departmental Management Team
Summary	Officers have suggested providing another update report on the borough of culture progress during this municipal year.
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring.

LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	
Who suggested	The Panel agreed they wished to receive a briefing after accessibility at local stations was discussed at the 30 April

it?	meeting.
Summary	Following the failed bid to secure funding for step free access at Raynes Park and Motspur Park stations, what further action is being explored within the Local Implementation Plan to address how we will improve access for all residents and deliver on the Mayors Transport Strategy outcomes.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight
Timing	27 June 2019
Expert(s)	Representatives from TFL, South West Trains and Network Rail.

MERTON ADULT EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing item.
Summary	Members will need to determine whether the usual annual report/update will be sufficient to allow it to monitor progress against any issues identified by Ofsted.
Scrutiny type	Executive oversight/performance monitoring
Timing	To occur a full year after the last report was received by the Panel (March 2020)

PARKING	
Who suggested it?	Members of the Environment & Regeneration Departmental Management Team, Members and residents through the topic suggestion process.
Summary	<p>This is a broad area of interest which potentially warrants more than one agenda item on the Panel's work programme:</p> <p><u>Controlled Parking Zones</u> – Residents have a variety of frustrations with controlled parking zones in the borough including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is becoming increasingly difficult to park near their houses in a CPZ. • CPZ's are increasing steadily • The conversion of Green Lane and Central Road to CPZ's. Parking on the Haig Housing South Morden estate is controlled and limited, leaving some residents and their guests having to park on the roads nearby. • Parking restrictions of 10-4pm do not deter commuter parking but 10-11am would benefit residents who could

	<p>then park outside their house for most of the day.</p> <p><u>Cashless parking</u> - Members requested the Panel receive an implementation update.</p> <p><u>Diesel Levy</u> - The Panel wish to monitor the implementation of the diesel levy to assess whether the policy is beginning to have an impact on desired outcomes.</p> <p><u>Parking charges review</u> - The Panel resolved to welcome the review of Parking Charges planned 6-12 months after implementation of the new charges and recommended that the Panel also has an opportunity to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the findings. (</p>
Scrutiny type	Potentially executive oversight, performance management and pre-decision scrutiny
Timing	17 March 2020
Guest(s)	This is dependent on the topics selected.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
Who suggested it?	This is a standing item, taken at every meeting.
Summary	The performance report features a range of key performance indicators from the Environment & Regeneration and Community & Housing Departments. This therefore acts as a health check for the Panel and as such is over and above the more detailed thematic reports scheduled to the Panel.
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	Taken every meeting (agreed).
Expert(s)	Every year the Panel can decide to appoint a lead member for monitoring performance data who will work closely with officers to build their understanding of the data and drive the effectiveness of performance monitoring. It is within the Panel's gift to determine whether or not to appoint a performance lead for this year and then for them to determine how they may wish to work in order to support the Panel in this aspect of its work.

PLANNING/ENFORCEMENT/DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	
Who suggested it?	This is a continuation of the Panel's existing work on building

	control.
Summary	<p><u>Enforcement</u></p> <p>During the last municipal year, the Panel took an update report item on planning enforcement. This looked at the reasons for the backlog of cases and the efforts being made to change working practices to address the backlog. The Panel resolved that it should be routinely supplied with trend data on the number of planning enforcement cases that are six months old or more. Taking a brief update item on planning enforcement would allow this data to be supplied and to check progress on achieving the proposed changes to working practices.</p> <p><u>Making all pre-application discussions public from the beginning</u></p> <p>Developers will routinely have discussions with the planning officers before a planning application is submitted. Notes of these meetings are not currently made public, and as a result the public has no inkling that a scheme is being prepared in their area. This fails to allow the public to be involved in the creative process from the start.</p> <p><u>Review of Planning Procedures</u> to ensure that no applications for planning permission are registered where they are deficient in necessary detail.</p> <p><u>Review the Council's design panel</u></p> <p>The panel's work is to review schemes brought to it by the Council officers. Their reports are then passed to the Planning Applications Committee to hopefully help them in their decision. There does not appear to have been any review of the DRP's operation recently taking into account;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have the right balance of skills on the Panel? • Are we dealing with wider aspects of design such as energy, sustainability, urban design and how a proposal fits into its surroundings • Panel verdicts on a scheme are presented as a single view (red/yellow/green) but in many cases the Panel view is not a consensus, but a majority. To reflect the true views, should the voting be shown? • Should there be system of 'feedback', so that Panel members see the results of their earlier decisions when a project is completed.
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review/update report.
Timing	25 February 2020

Guests	A representative of Wimbledon Society Planning & Environment Committee which has made the topic suggestions related to planning.
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PUBLIC TOILETS	
Who suggested it?	Resident through the topic suggestion process.
Summary	<p>A resident suggested the Council introduce the Community toilet initiative scheme to the borough.</p> <p>Offering a Community Toilet Scheme would involve the Council working with local businesses and voluntary and community sector service providers to provide free to use toilet facilities to all members of the public.</p> <p>LB Richmond were the first to introduce this initiative and the scheme reports it decreases instances of public urination, anti-social behaviour and greatly benefits the elderly and those with young children.</p>
Scrutiny type	Scrutiny review

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL	
Who suggested it?	A Member through the Member Survey results, Residents and Members through the topic suggestion process
Summary	<p><u>How can the Council assist council staff to travel to work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved bike storage provision • Provide staff changing spaces. • Expanding car park spaces • E-bikes <p>Residents suggested there is a <u>lack of safe walking and cycling routes</u> (and places to store bikes) in the borough. This disadvantages those who can't afford public or private transport.</p> <p><u>Electric cars update</u></p> <p>Members suggested a greater focus on promoting sustainable travel with a focus on cycle ways, e-bikes and other active travel measures</p>

Scrutiny type	Scrutiny Review
Timing	Seek suggestions from Members

TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION	
Who suggested it?	Continuation of the Panel's interest in scrutinising the on-going town centre regeneration programme.
Summary	<p>The Panel has taken (at least annually) updates on the on-going town centre regeneration in Wimbledon, Raynes Park, Morden, Mitcham and Colliers Wood and it is suggested that this continue during this municipal year.</p> <p>It is therefore suggested that the Panel take another presentation from officers providing an update on the whole regeneration programme.</p> <p>Visit/create working groups to bring together councillors and residents to steer future town centre redevelopment.</p> <p>Additionally, there may be a need for a specific focus/separate item on the Morden redevelopment.</p>
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring
Timing	17 March 2020 meeting for an update presentation. This will be exactly a year since the Panel last received an update and will allow progress made during the intervening period to be highlighted
Visit	Panel members may want to visit one (or more) of the town centres that have benefitted from regeneration to see this first hand.

WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANING	
Who suggested it?	A large number of residents and the Environment and Regeneration DMT. (This remains the most frequently suggested topic by residents across the borough.)
Summary	<p><u>Veolia performance update</u></p> <p>Ongoing issues with performance have resulted in Panel members maintaining their interest in the contract in terms of performance management and working with local residents to raise these directly when Veolia have attended the Panel (Scott Edgell, General Manager for Veolia attended twice during the last municipal year).</p> <p>Continuing to monitor this contract will allow the issues</p>

raised by residents through the topic suggestion process to be addressed. These largely focus on performance management including:

- Missed collection
- Bins not returned back to properties
- Streets not swept
- Leaves not removed
- Fly tipping
- Graffiti.
- Not removing green waste
- Residents having to make numerous trips to the dump or hire skips
- Improve the frequency with which litter bins are emptied
- Online reporting tool does not work

Residents are also keen to know what action is and can be taken to reduce the incidence of fly tipping. (See Environmental Enforcement)

Recycling

Recycling boxes are of insufficient capacity to last two weeks. Residents are having to make trips to the recycling centre.

Neighbourhood re-use and recycling centres

Currently the only container that I am aware of for recycling small electrical appliances is the one in the Sainsbury's car park in Colliers Wood container is constantly over-flowing, with items left on the ground alongside it. Could Merton Council provide more of these containers in convenient locations (e.g. the car park alongside Wimbledon Theatre)?

The removal of the 'free' bulky waste collection service –

One resident suggested this could impact fly tipping around the borough as the £30 charge is too high for a lot of people. If they don't have access to a car then they can't visit the recycling centre, and public transport will be no good for bulky and large items.

In February, Government launched a series of consultations to overhaul the waste system, cut plastic pollution, and move towards a more circular economy. One key idea is the introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme for cans and bottles. The results, when published, could provide further ideas for encouraging residents to recycle and improving

	rates.
Scrutiny type	Performance monitoring of an external provider. Given this scrutiny will be of an external body, the Panel may find it useful to jointly plan its scrutiny of the contractor.
Timing	Panel requested an update in 6 months' time at the February 2019 meeting – Schedule for 3 September 2019
Guest(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives from Veolia; • Representatives from resident groups/associations, to provide direct feedback on the quality of the service; • Representatives from local community and voluntary groups including Merton Matters, Sustainable Merton etc. • DEFRA to seek feedback on the deposit scheme consultation when completed

Selecting a Scrutiny Topic – criteria used at the workshop on 20 May 2019.

The purpose of the workshop is to identify priority issues for consideration as agenda items or in-depth reviews by the Panel. The final decision on this will then be made by the Panel at its first meeting on 27 June 2019.

All the issues that have been suggested to date by councillors, officers, partner organisations and residents are outlined in the supporting papers.

Further suggestions may emerge from discussion at the workshop.

Points to consider when selecting a topic:

- Is the issue strategic, significant and specific?
- Is it an area of underperformance?
- Will the scrutiny activity add value to the Council's and/or its partners' overall performance?
- Is it likely to lead to effective, tangible outcomes?
- Is it an issue of community concern and will it engage the public?
- Does this issue have a potential impact for one or more section(s) of the population?
- Will this work duplicate other work already underway, planned or done recently?
- Is it an issue of concern to partners and stakeholders?
- Are there adequate resources available to do the activity well?

Notes of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel topic selection meeting on 20 May 2019.

Attendees:

Councillors: Natasha Irons (Chair), Daniel Holden (Vice Chair), Aidan Mundy, Owen Pritchard, Anthony Fairclough.

Officers: John Bosley (Interim Assistant Director- Public Space), Cathryn James (Interim Assistant Director - Public Protection), Steve Langley (Head of Housing Needs), James McGinlay (Assistant Director for Sustainable Communities), Chris Lee (Director Environment and Regeneration), Rosie Mckeever (Scrutiny Officer)

THEMES

The Chair proposed the idea of theming the meetings under their broader subject umbrellas to allow all linked topics to come to the Panel at the same time. This will encourage more flow to the meetings and allow more cross topic discussion. The five themes are;

AIR QUALITY

Air Quality

AGREED to take an update report on the implementation of the Air Quality Action Plan and the recommendations of the air quality task group.

Diesel Levy Implementation

AGREED to take review of the levy after Autumn Cabinet, at the Director's suggestion.

Local Implementation Plan

AGREED to take a briefing on the third Local Implementation Plan.

Parking Charges review

As a starting point, it was AGREED to take an update report on the implementation of cashless parking and undertake a possible review of the parking charges six months after implementation.

Sustainable Travel

AGREED to include updates on electric cars and promoting a greater focus on sustainable travel, cycle ways, e-bikes, bicycle storage and other active travel measures.

CULTURE

Library and Heritage Service Annual Report

AGREED to take this item as usual with an update report.

London Borough of Culture

AGREED to take an update report.

Merton Adult Education Annual Report

AGREED to take the usual update report.

Cabinet Member priorities

AGREED to invite Cabinet Members to the Panel to ask them to provide a short update on their priorities. Noted that Cllr Byers now has responsibility for Environment and Street Cleanliness and therefore should be invited to those meetings where this will feature.

Idverde Grounds Maintenance

AGREED to take an update report on the operation of the contract by Idverde for performance monitoring purposes.

HOUSING

Clarion Housing Group

AGREED to invite Clarion to the Panel for two sessions. One focused on the estates regeneration. The other on repairs and maintenance performance.

Housing Strategy Update

AGREED this item should also include Affordable Housing and Housing Supply. Noted that a new housing strategy is being commissioned at present. Homelessness Reduction Act

Universal Credit

AGREED to not take this item as there would not be enough time to explore the matter in depth and the Panel felt that the Children and Young People Panel would be better placed to take this topic.

Empty Homes

AGREED this data would be included in the Housing Strategy update, rather than as a separate agenda item.

Private Rent Sector

AGREED to include support for private renters, dealing with difficult landlords and an update on the repeal of Section 21 Notices if applicable.

REGENERATION

Clarion Housing estates regeneration update

AGREED to invite Clarion Housing to give a presentation on the developments.

Design Review Panel

AGREED. Assistant Director of Sustainable Communities agreed to bring the review to Scrutiny

Town Centre Regeneration

AGREED to take the usual update/review item at the end of the municipal year. In addition, the Panel would enjoy the opportunity to undertake visits to the boroughs towns to see what developments have already happened and those that are planned.

The Panel would like to hear how the regeneration plans are considering disabled access, public toilets and baby changing facilities. Could the Council implement the Community Toilet Scheme Initiative?

WASTE

Environmental Enforcement – Fly Tipping

AGREED to take an update item on the operation of this team and development of the fly tipping strategy.

Waste, Recycling and Street Cleaning

AGREED that there should be updates on the performance and Veolia invited to the meetings.

STANDING ITEMS

Performance monitoring

AGREED to retain this as a standing item. It was highlighted that the Panel has previously benefited from having a member designated as performance monitoring lead. The Panel is required to agree annually whether or not to retain this post and to make a suitable appointment if retained. The Panel would also like to consider whether the metrics need to be reviewed.

Budget/Business Planning

AGREED to continue to consider the budget and business plan and to make full use of the two stages in November and January

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

Work programme

AGREED to retain this as a standing item at the end of every meeting.

Task Group suggestions

- Economy. Promoting community wealth through local procurement.
- Fly tipping – Environmental Enforcement strategy.

Task group options as identified at the workshop on 20 May 2019

Environmental Enforcement: Fly tipping strategy

Fly-tipping, as defined by the House of Commons Library, is "the illegal disposal of household, industrial, commercial or other 'controlled' waste without a waste management licence". There is high local/social media interest in this subject with growing demand from residents to improve street cleaning.

The Scrutiny Officer has consulted with the Interim Assistant Director for Public Space and the fly tipping strategy is currently being reviewed. The Communications team are actively involved in identifying the best ways to communicate, not just individual resident responsibilities for managing their own waste, but also how they can assist in identifying perpetrators, as well as promoting what the Enforcement Team do and the consequences of fly tipping in terms of action that has been/will be taken against those caught. The Interim AD is keen for the panel to give proper consideration to the updated strategy once completed. But with this in mind, what value could the Panel add to this piece of work?

Broadly, a task group could:

1. Allow the Panel the opportunity and time to look at the fly tipping strategy in even greater depth, to better understand how the team works and to deep dive into how fly tipping in the borough is being addressed. This could give the Panel a clearer understanding of the council's role and the work it undertakes regarding fly-tipping. It may be valuable for task group members to undertake visits to dumping hot spots or meet with NCO's to expand on their knowledge.
2. Undertake a focused piece of work on the causes of fly-tipping and effective actions employed to change behaviour and reduce fly tipping. Key areas could include;
 - Behavioural and sociological research - Understanding the reasons for behaviour. Could we run an anonymous survey for residents– why have you fly tipped?
 - Are there increasing trends and possible links to the introduction of charging for the collection of bulky items (has this increased dumping?)

Prof Simin Davoudi, an expert in environmental policy at Newcastle University, says a lack of local facilities and the cost of getting bulky items legally collected are to blame. "A good example is Nottingham City Council," she said. "They have shown that fly-tipping can be reduced if local authorities collect some of these items free of charge. They introduced free collection and they have reduced fly-tipping in the city by nearly 42%."

According to the National Fly-Tipping Prevention Group, financial gains (or savings) are the main motivations for fly-tipping. Others factors include "laziness and an attitude that someone else will clear up the waste".

The Task group could also look at;

- Deterrents (e.g. CCTV)
- The level of public awareness, communication, education provided at schools.
- Data – Prosecutions, hot spots, trends.

- Some Local Authorities have rebranded the term “Fly-tipping” to “Illegal Rubbish Dumping” (IRD) in communications with residents in a bid to change behaviour. Has this had an impact?
3. Look at how Merton compares with its neighbouring boroughs (both within performance monitoring and enforcement policies). Though depending on the findings, this may not lend itself well to creation of an action plan.
- Collect information from other authorities on successful strategies e.g. Sutton Council’s Spick and Span programme of intensive street cleansing and community clean-ups. They are also trialling new high-tech ‘smart’ litter bins that use solar power to compress litter.
 - Success / failure of previous and current publicity campaigns
 - Can we improve the levels of community involvement in keeping the streets clean

Further reading:

- **House of Commons Library briefing paper:** Fly tipping – the illegal dumping of waste. www.parliament.uk/commons-library
- **Unwanted goods, unwanted mess** – London Assembly report looking at the issue of fly-tipping in London. <https://www.london.gov.uk/node/44389>

Economy: Local procurement and how the Council can support local businesses and encourage local spending?

According to the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, when you shop at a local independently-owned businesses, as much as 70p in every pound you spend stays in our local economy. There are many other benefits to consider, such as;

- **Community identity** - One-of-a-kind and locally made products can attract customers to a community, bolstering tourism and contributing to the local vibe. Locally made goods are also attractive to residents who want to minimize their carbon footprints and support local businesses.
- **Community involvement** - Small business owners are more likely to build personal relationships with their customers, sponsor local events and participate in community charity events. Many small business owners form casual or formal relationships, such as the Love Wimbledon BID. These relationships leverage the expertise of the participants to contribute to the business community's long-term success.
- **Environmental Benefits** - Pedestrian-friendly towns have demonstrable environmental benefits. For example, small businesses clustered near residential areas may reduce car use and traffic congestion, resulting in better air quality.
- **Financial** - When local residents shop at small businesses within their communities, their money stays within the local economy, helping to improve their community as a result. Likewise, local small businesses tend to buy locally as well, pumping more of their profits back into the community than their supermarket counterparts, helping with economic development.
- **Local Jobs** – Small businesses are often committed to their hometowns and support the local economy through hiring people in the area.

The Task Group could;

1. Research the economic situation in Merton to provide an overview of the local economy in Merton
2. Undertake document and policy review to identify how the Council currently supports small and medium sized businesses in the towns/wards and what further support is possible.
3. Consider what could be learnt from other Local Authorities
4. Look at the vision for Merton and the Future Merton Regeneration plans and how the Panel can feed into this work.
5. Ask the Experts such as Future Merton Officers and the Chief Executive for Love Wimbledon BID. What do they believe can be done to improve collaborative working?
6. What scope does the Council have to minimise the time shop units are left empty and to improve the appearance of empty units?